562 and possibly was invented to keep women in subjection. It has only partly succeeded. Something more potent than a creation story is required to keep many of the LUO women down. Two illustrations [593] suffice to show this. The first in Church. The collection is being taken up, and a man finds himself without any cash. He crosses over to the women's side, whispers a few words to his wife, whereupon she gives him a cent for the collection. Like many a wife in other lands, she holds the purse strings. The second the Law Court. [586] A wife pleads for a divorce from her husband on the ground that he has become a polygamist. She gets her divorce.

584 Much of the apparent inequality is only apparent, not real. The thing which, more than any other, has been quoted as showing the inferior position accorded to women, is the manner in which girls are given in marriage. But this is not as much a matter of sex as of age. If it be true that girls are sometimes given in marriage without their wishes being consulted in the matter, it is also true that many a young man is provided with a wife without his wishes being consulted either. Not so long ago I asked a man what the girl to whom he was engaged was like. He replied that he had never seen her, that the marriage had been arranged by his father. This kind of thing is quite common. And it must not be forgotten that the girl's mother is taken into the fullest consultation when the question of her daughter's betrothal is raised. It is not decided by the men only. And generally there is some form of consultation with the girl. Long and bitter experience has taught the community that to force some girls beyond a certain point is only to lay up trouble for the future. Only three weeks ago a father came to me to ask me to try to mediate in his daughter's affairs. She had been betrothed when quite a young child to a man old enough to be her aged father. He had in due course taken her to wife, and there were two children by the union. 586 Then she left him and consorted with another man, more nearly her own age. I saw the woman, went into the matter and found that the old man was so uncongenial to her, that even the fact that she had born him two children was not strong enough to reconcile her to her lot. She had much of my sympathy, though I could not condone the desertion of her children.

581 Not even the very strongest bonds can bind a woman who wishes to break them. The most binding form of betrothal known to the LUO, is that which is the outcome of an alliance between two families. The Luo have a proverb which runs " Osiep otho, to wat okotho." In English it would run " friendship dies, but relationship does not die." So, as in other lands, the heads of two Luo families may desire to 584 cement their friendship by ties of intermarriage. A feast is provided by one of the parties, generally by the one taking the initiative in

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

THE NILOTIC KAVIRONDO.

By G. A. S. Northcote.

101 The Nilotic Kavirondo, or Jaluo as they should more properly be called, who inhabit the north-eastern shore of the Victoria Nyanza, belong to the same family as the great Dinka tribe of the Soudan and are near relations of the Aluri and Acholi tribes which live on both sides of the Nile near Wadilai, the differences being far less marked than those between two adjoining Bantu tribes usually are.

174 In all probability, therefore, the Jaluo originally formed one tribe with the Acholi. What their reasons for migration were cannot be ascertained, but probably it was due to overcrowding or to a dispute about the chieftaincy. The natives themselves can throw but little light on the matter: they state that they came from the north-west under one big chief and that when they *again* became too numerous they split up into smaller chieftaincies. The fact that they lay stress on their again increasing numbers points to the conclusion that overcrowding [626] was their motive for migrating; but as will be seen later, they use secession as their chief weapon against an unpopular chief. Had they been driven out by conquest there would be abundant traces of such a cause, but no such signs are visible.

142 In appearance the Jaluo are a fine race, not so much remarkable for beauty of face as for stature and development. They are a large-boned and deep-chested tribe, somewhat fleshy and very muscular. They present a great contrast in this last respect to the other Nilotic tribes in British East Africa, the Masai, Nandi and Lumbwa. All four are capable of great endurance, but none of the last three named [262] can claim to be a muscular race. The superior physique of the Jaluo is probably due mainly to their agricultural and industrial habits and to the fact that their food is mainly vegetable, while up to the great cattle plague of 1883, the Masai, Nandi and Lumbwa lived entirely upon animal food.

Facially the Kavirondo have rather squat noses, large mouths and big wide-opened eyes. The everyday dress of the men consists of a goat skin hung over the 291 right shoulder, or of nothing. In most cases they have quantities of iron wire on [301] their legs and arms and strings of beads round their necks. The women are usually completely nude, except that married women wear a small grass tassel behind, hanging from the waist; latterly, however, they have taken to wearing a strip of cloth round the waist about six or eight inches in breadth and only just meeting in front.

[581] The tassels are discarded when a woman's husband dies and cannot be again worn until she is re-married. It is significant of the respect which the Jaluo have

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11

towards marriage, that anyone who touches this tassel has to pay a fine of three goats to the husband.

The women do not wear iron wire to the same extent as their husbands and brothers. These may frequently be seen with from six to ten pieces wound round their arms and legs, which shine from constant rubbing and polishing with oil and fat. Happily there are signs that this wire is going out of fashion, whereby they will be spared the sores and ulcers which are its continual accompaniment. Trade generally will thus be put upon a sound cash basis instead of resting as it has done upon a precarious footing of barter. The Jaluo, who are keen traders, have begun to realise the advantages of the rupee over the iron, being helped to this conclusion by the necessity of having to pay three rupees a year for every hut.

The Jaluo full dress is very striking. A huge hat of monkey or goat skin, or of feathers, often of ostrich, surmounts a well-oiled visage which is ornamented by lines of small white beads across the forehead, nose, upper lip and chin and fastened behind the ear. Round the neck are strings of beads, brass cartridge cases, fetishes, and a round or two of iron wire. Across the chest and sometimes down the back are rows of cowries sewn on to strips of leather; and over the right shoulder hangs a big black feather boa, or an ornament made of the long hair from the wildebeest's tail. The everyday goat skin is discarded. Round the waist they fasten strings of iron beads which they manufacture from iron wire; the iron has an extra polish, and from it depend bunches of feathers. The body is well oiled and sometimes covered with red clay or charcoal. Finally they fasten to the knee and ankle small bells made of iron wire in the shape of broad-bean pods and with one or two small iron beads inside.

Their weapons consist of a spear with a long haft and a short blade, a Masai sword on the right hip and occasionally a bow and arrows instead of the spear. Their shields are very large and heavy, made of buffalo hide and of a peculiar shape; vertically they are about three feet six inches in height; horizontally nearly six feet in length and curved back so that the left side, back and front of the warrior are covered; they are painted red, white and black, often in artistic designs. These designs probably at one time indicated to what family the owner belonged; to-day, however, this idea, if it ever existed, seems to have quite disappeared, each man painting on his shield the pattern which pleases him most. Further investigation on this subject should be made in order to make certain whether the patterns have any peculiar meaning.

Some wear the hair long, twisting it into long thin strings and dressing it with oil and red clay or charcoal. Others partially shave the head, always leaving at least one little tuft, which is cut off and worn by the chief mourner at the owner's funeral. Sometimes the body is striped or spotted with yellow clay in imitation of the zebra or leopard.

Politically the Jaluo are in a semi-feudal state; the tribe is divided up into larger or smaller chieftaincies or clans, which correspond to the old baronies, but there is no one overlord to make the resemblance complete. Nominally the chiefs

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
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V

BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Preliminary Considerations

One difference between the older traditional kind of marriage and marriage as it is conducted nowadays lies in the part played by relatives to make the venture a success. Individual initiative was formerly negligible, the greater part of the marriage negotiations being undertaken by the relatives of both parties. This had the effect of reducing the importance of the bridegroom whose initiative gave way to a dependence upon the good will of his relations to whom the task of negotiation was left. 584 178

At present the tendency in marriage is towards individualism, although it is still a matter where society plays a considerable part. But since the individual man and woman are taking a greater part in deciding whom they shall marry, there is now a greater opportunity to develop an attachment genuinely based upon love. Steps are still usually taken, however, to ensure that the man's family has sufficient wealth to pay a satisfactory dowry, and the co-operation of the society in which the girl lives is needed if the relationship is to be successfully established. Great care is also taken to see that the marriage of the couple would not go against the normal stratification of relationships already in existence. [581] 582 613

The marriage of a member of A-B family to C-D family* excludes the children of G and H from intermarrying with any member of the lineage of the maternal grandparents. So long as connection with the

*See diagram on p. 44